

Civil Air Patrol

For Immediate Release



Delaware Valley Composite Squadron

News Release

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Busy Weekend for Local U.S. Civil Air Patrol Cadets

(Flemington, NJ) -- This past weekend proved to be a busy time for the U.S. Civil Air Patrol Delaware Valley Composite Squadron when their skills and training were put to the test on more than one occasion. The squadron was dispatched by the U.S. Air Force when an emergency transmitter locator (ELT) distress signal went off in western NJ. Following a successful find with the ELT, the cadets finished their weekend by participating in Civil Air Patrol orientation flights at Somerset Airport.

Just after 8 am on Saturday morning a call from the U.S. Air Force was received and by 9 am the available members of the squadron were assembled and ready to go. The ground team consisted 1Lt Bill Pittenger (Readington) 2nd Lt Friedo Meyer (Clinton), SM Christopher Casey (Readington), Cadet Patrick Brennan (Clinton), Cadet Nick Biondo (Readington) and Cadet Robert Regan (Readington).

Utilizing their extensive training in tracking down ELT signals, they quickly found the plane at a local airport. Luckily the device was not triggered due to a downed aircraft, but instead was activated accidentally through the plane's annual maintenance. The ELT signal is transmitted on a specific air band frequency and is often not detected without specifically listening for it. It is not possible to determine if an ELT signal is caused by an aircraft in distress or by error without tracking down the source. The Civil Air Patrol treats all signals as emergencies.

Civil Air Patrol 1st Lieutenant Bill Pittenger was the mission's Ground Team Leader. "We were certainly happy to determine that this was not a distress signal and no one was hurt. I am proud of our team's ability to assemble quickly, locate the transmitter, and complete the mission efficiently. Our cadet and senior (adult) members are always practicing and training to ensure that we can continue to be of service to our community."

On Sunday things got even more exciting for the cadets when they had the opportunity to fly orientation flights. CAP offers a mandatory Aerospace Program for cadets which strives to expand their love and knowledge in aviation, space and technology. The O-flights are designed to allow the cadets a hands-on flying experience in a single engine plane, which is part of the curriculum of the aerospace training program. Cadets are allowed to take control of the plane under close supervision of an experienced CAP pilot. Five cadets from the Del Val squadron, Cadet Stephen Pettit, Cadet Patrick Brennan, Cadet Donald Conway, Cadet Nick Biondo and Cadet Robert Regan, participated in the weekend's O-flights and what better way to end a busy weekend than personally flying a single engine plane on such a beautiful day.

Squadron Commander, Captain Shannon Bingert, "This past weekend went very smoothly, the five cadets had a beautiful day to take part in a hands-on introduction to aviation in the cadet orientation flight program."

Civil Air Patrol, the official U.S. Air Force Auxiliary, is a civilian, volunteer, nonprofit, service organization. The unpaid members perform more than 85 percent of inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue and Coordination Center. Volunteers also take a leading role in aerospace education and conduct one of America's finest youth programs through CAP Cadet Programs.

Del Val Composite Squadron meets on Monday nights at Acorn Montessori school on Rt. 31. For more information about Civil Air Patrol, please visit our squadron website at <http://delval.njwg.cap.gov> or contact our squadron commander, Captain Shannon Bingert at shnin6@msn.com.

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